
CHAPTER 9

SUPPORT OPERATIONS

The overall purpose of support operations is to meet the immediate needs of designated groups, for a limited time, until civil authorities can accomplish these tasks without Army assistance. In support operations, Army forces provide essential services, assets, or specialized resources to help civil authorities deal with situations beyond their capabilities. Army forces may provide relief or assistance directly, when necessary, but they normally support the overall effort controlled by another agency. In support operations, the adversary is often disease, hunger, or the consequences of disaster. Support operations may complement tactical operations or stability operations, or they may be conducted as separate missions. Most tactical operations require complementary support operations before, during, and after combat. For instance, the battalion may have to assist civilian firefighters during combat if fire threatens its tactical position or freedom of action.

Because of their greater combat potential, digitized SBCT infantry battalions are normally committed to tactical operations for as long as fighting continues. Nonetheless, their commanders can expect to participate in support operations with other units from time to time. Their special ability to track forces, handle large amounts of information, and conduct precise logistical operations gives digitized units special advantages in support operations.

Support operations missions vary by type and are further differentiated by the specific factors of METT-TC. Support operations usually require the battalion to perform common tactical missions and tasks but also call on it to execute unique missions and tasks. The purposes of support operations, the special constraints they place on commanders, and the types of judgments expected of battalion commanders and their subordinates distinguishes support operations from other operations.

Section I. CHARACTERISTICS OF SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Support operations involve Army forces providing essential supplies, capabilities, and services to help civil authorities deal with situations beyond their control. In most cases, Army forces focus on overcoming conditions created by natural or manmade disasters. Army forces may provide relief or assistance directly, but Army activities in support operations most often involve setting the conditions that facilitate the ability of civil authorities or NGOs to provide the required direct support to the affected population.

9-1. TYPES OF SUPPORT OPERATIONS

The two types of support operations are domestic support operations (DSOs) and foreign humanitarian assistance (FHA) operations. They share four forms of operations, which occur to varying degrees in both DSO and FHA operations:

- Relief operations.
- Support to incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosive consequence management (CBRNE-CM).
- Support to civil law enforcement.
- Community assistance.

The US Army conducts DSOs in the US and its territories, using active and reserve components. It conducts FHA operations abroad and under the direction of a combatant commander. Domestic emergencies can require Army forces to respond with multiple capabilities and services. For this reason, they may conduct the four forms of support operations simultaneously during a given operation.

a. **Domestic Support Operations.** DSOs supplement the efforts and resources of state and local governments and NGOs within the United States. During DSOs, the US military always responds in support of another civilian agency. DSOs also include those activities and measures taken by the Department of Defense (DOD) to foster mutual assistance and support between DOD and any civil government agency in planning or preparedness for, or in the application of resources for response to, the consequences of civil emergencies or attacks, including national security emergencies or major disasters. A presidential declaration of an emergency or disaster area usually precedes a DSO.

(1) The US military provides domestic support primarily in accordance with a DOD directive for military assistance to civil authorities. The military assistance to civil authorities directive addresses responses to both natural and manmade disasters and includes military assistance with civil disturbances, counterdrug activities, counterterrorism activities, and law enforcement.

(2) In accordance with the Constitution, civilian government is responsible for preserving public order. However, the Constitution does allow the use of military forces to protect federal and civilian property and functions. The Posse Comitatus Act restricts the use of the military in federal status and prevents it from executing laws and performing civilian law enforcement functions within the US.

(3) DSOs focus on the condition of all types of natural and manmade properties, with the goal of helping to protect and restore these properties as requested. Typically, environmental operations are conducted in response to such events as forest and grassland fires, hazardous material releases, floods, and earthquakes.

b. **Foreign Humanitarian Assistance.** US forces conduct FHA operations outside the borders of the US or its territories to relieve or reduce the results of natural or manmade disasters or other endemic conditions, such as human suffering, disease, or deprivation, that might present a serious threat to life or that can result in great damage to or loss of property.

(1) The US military typically supplements the host nation authorities in concert with other governmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations, private voluntary organizations, and unaffiliated individuals. The majority of foreign humanitarian assistance operations closely resemble domestic support operations. The distinction between the two is the legal restrictions applied to US forces inside the US and its territories. Posse Comitatus does not apply to US forces overseas.

(2) Foreign humanitarian assistance operations are limited in scope and duration. They focus exclusively on prompt aid to resolve an immediate crisis. Crises or disasters caused by hostile individuals or factions attacking a government are normally classified

as stability rather than support operations. In environments where the situation is vague or hostile, support activities are considered a subset of a larger stability or offensive or defensive operation.

9-2. THE ARMY'S ROLE IN SUPPORT OPERATIONS

The Army is not specifically organized, trained, or equipped for support operations. Instead, Army elements and forces, tailored for warfighting, are rapidly adapted to dominate a crisis or disaster situation. In support operations, Army forces apply decisive military capabilities to set the conditions for the supported civil authorities to achieve success. Army forces have a functional chain of command, reliable communications, and well-trained, well-equipped forces that can operate and sustain themselves in an austere environment with organic assets.

a. **Multiple and Overlapping Activities.** In most situations, Army forces involved in support operations, both DSO and FHA, execute a combination of multiple overlapping activities. Forces must conduct support operations with consistency and impartiality to encourage cooperation from indigenous forces and the population and to preserve the legitimacy of the overall effort. The actions of squads, platoons, or even individual soldiers take place under the scrutiny of many interested groups and can have disproportionate effects on mission success. Therefore, high levels of discipline, training, and a thorough understanding of mission outcome are necessary for effective support operations.

b. **Mission Training.** A sound foundation in combat mission training and in basic military skills and discipline underpins the battalion's ability to perform support operations missions, but many of the key individual and collective skills differ and must be trained for deliberately. Battalions use most of their regularly trained movement and security tasks in support operations missions, but they modify those tasks for the special conditions of their mission. They also train leaders and soldiers for unique tasks necessary to the certain types of operation that they are assigned.

c. **Operational Environment.** The mission, the terms governing the Army's presence in the AO, the character and attitude of the population, the military and civilian organizations cooperating with the battalion, the physical and cultural environments, and a host of other factors combine to make each support operations mission unique. With the exception of specific actions undertaken in counterterrorism operations, support to counterdrug operations, and noncombatant evacuation operations, support missions tend to be decentralized and highly structured. A battalion's activities consist in large part of directing the operations of its companies and supporting units within a sector or AO in accordance with a detailed operations order.

9-3. FORMS OF SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Support operations may be independent actions, or they may complement offensive, defensive, and stability operations. Most offensive, defensive, and stability operations require some form of support operations before, during, and after execution. Support operations generally fall into four categories:

- Relief operations.
- Support to incidents involving WMD.

- Support to civil law enforcement.
- Community assistance.

a. **Relief Operations.** In general, the actions performed during relief operations are identical in both domestic support operations and foreign humanitarian assistance operations. The actions can be characterized as either humanitarian relief, which focuses on the well-being of supported populations, or disaster relief, which focuses on recovery of critical infrastructure after a natural or manmade disaster. Relief operations accomplish one or more of the following:

- Save lives.
- Reduce suffering.
- Recover essential infrastructure.
- Improve quality of life.

(1) **Disaster Relief.** Disaster relief encompasses those actions taken to restore or recreate the minimum infrastructure to allow effective humanitarian relief and set the conditions for longer-term recovery. This includes establishing and maintaining minimum safe working conditions, plus security measures necessary to protect relief workers and the affected population from additional harm. Disaster relief may involve repairing or demolishing damaged structures; restoring or building bridges, roads, and airfields; and removing debris from critical routes and relief sites.

(2) **Humanitarian Relief.** Humanitarian relief focuses on life-saving measures to alleviate the immediate needs of a population in crisis. It often includes the provision of medical support, food, water, medicines, clothing, blankets, shelter, and heating or cooking fuel. In some cases, it involves transportation support to move affected people from a disaster area.

b. **Support to Domestic CBRNE Consequence Management.** Military operations assist civil authorities in protecting US territory, population, and infrastructure prior to an attack by supporting domestic preparedness and critical asset protection programs. If an attack occurs, military support responds to the consequences of the attack.

(1) **Domestic Preparedness.** The Army's role in facilitating domestic preparedness is to strengthen the existing expertise of civil authorities. This is accomplished in the two primary areas of response and training. Response is the immediate reaction to an attack; training includes what happens after the attack.

(2) **Protection of Critical Assets.** The purpose of this program is to identify critical assets and to assure their integrity, availability, survivability, and capability to support vital DOD missions across the full spectrum of military operations. Critical assets include telecommunications, electric power, gas and oil, banking and finance, transportation, water, and emergency services. An attack on any of these assets may disrupt civilian commerce, government operations, and the military.

(3) **Response to CBRNE Incidents.** The initial response to the use of WMD is primarily from local assets but sustained Army participation may be required soon afterward. The Army's capabilities in this environment are--

- Detection.
- Decontamination and medical care.
- Triage and treatment.
- MEDEVAC.

- Hospitalization (patient decontamination for self-evacuation).
- Technical consultation to commanders and local health care providers on health effects of WMD incidents.

c. **Support to Civil Law Enforcement.** Support to domestic civil law enforcement generally involves activities related to counterterrorism, counterdrug operations, civil disturbance operations, or general support. Army support may involve providing resources, training, or direct support. Federal forces remain under the control of their military chain of command at all times while providing the support.

(1) **Support to Counterterrorism.** Army forces do not conduct domestic counterterrorism, but they may provide support to lead federal agencies during crisis and consequence management of a terrorist incident. They may provide assistance in the areas of transportation, equipment, training, and personnel. When terrorists pose an imminent threat to US territory, its people, or its critical assets, the US military may conduct support operations to counter these threats, using ground, air, space, special operations, or maritime forces. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is responsible for crisis management in the US.

(2) **Support to Counterdrug Operations.** Army support to domestic counterdrug operations is very limited and usually only in a support role.

(3) **Civil Disturbance Operations.** The Army assists civil authorities in restoring law and order when local and state law enforcement agencies are unable to resolve a civil disturbance. Federal Army forces assist in restoring law and order when the magnitude of a disturbance exceeds the capabilities of local and state law enforcement agencies, including the National Guard. Army participation is to apply the minimum force necessary to restore order to the point where civilian authorities no longer require military assistance.

(4) **General Support.** The Army may also provide training, share information, and provide equipment and facilities to federal, state, and local civilian law enforcement agencies.

d. **Community Assistance.** Community assistance is a broad range of activities designed to strengthen the relationship between the Army and the American people. These projects should exercise individual soldier skills, encourage teamwork, challenge leader planning and coordination skills, and result in accomplishments that are measurable. Example activities include youth physical fitness programs, medical readiness programs, and antidrug programs.

Section II. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The planning and execution of support operations are fundamentally similar to planning, preparing, executing, and assessing offensive, defensive, and stability operations. However, while each support operation is unique, the following four broad considerations can help forces develop mission-specific concepts and schemes for executing support operations.

9-4. CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Whether they confront the complications of floods, storms, earthquakes, riots, disease, or other humanitarian crises, the SBCT infantry battalion combines the usual strengths of the mounted and dismounted forces. Although it has limited numbers of medical and

engineer elements, the battalion brings to the operation its outstanding abilities to organize and supervise operations, collect and distribute information, and communicate, as well as large numbers of highly disciplined and motivated soldiers. The following four broad imperatives that pertain to support operations help forces plan and execute support operations:

- Provide essential support to the largest number of people.
- Coordinate actions with other agencies.
- Establish measures of success.
- Transfer responsibility to civilian agencies as soon as possible.

a. **Provide Essential Support to the Largest Number of People.** Commanders must allocate finite resources to achieve the greatest good. Additionally, commanders require an accurate assessment of what needs to be done on order to employ military power effectively. In some cases, the battalion can accomplish this task using warfighting reconnaissance capabilities and techniques. Commanders determine how and where to apply limited assets to benefit the most people in the most efficient way. They usually focus initial efforts on restoring vital services, which include food and water distribution, medical aid, power generation, search and rescue, and firefighting.

b. **Coordinate Actions with Other Agencies.** Domestic support operations are typically joint and interagency; foreign humanitarian assistance operations are usually multinational as well. Unity of effort between the military and local authorities requires constant communication to ensure that tasks are conducted in the most efficient and effective way and resources are used wisely.

c. **Establish Measures of Effectiveness.** A critical aspect of mission handover is to have objective standards for measuring progress. These measures of effectiveness determine the degree to which an operation is accomplishing its established objectives. For example, a measure of effectiveness might be a decrease in the number of deaths caused by starvation. This is an indicator that food convoys are reaching the designated areas. These measures are situationally dependent and must be adjusted as the situation changes and guidance from higher is developed.

d. **Transfer Responsibility to Civilian Agencies as Soon as Possible.** Support operations planning must always include the follow-on actions of the civilian agencies and the host nation to restore conditions to normal. The following considerations determine handover feasibility:

- Condition of supported population and governments.
- Competing mission requirements.
- Specified and implied commitment levels of time, resources, and forces.
- Maturity of the support effort.

9-5. PLANNING PROCESS

The battalion staff uses the standard Army planning process modified for use with the ABCS.

a. **Special Considerations.** The battalion planning staff must understand the following special considerations:

- Specialized support operations terminology in the mission and tasks assigned to the battalion for purposes of mission analysis and course of action development.
- Command relationships, especially in multinational operations and in support to US civil authorities.
- Presence of, activities of, and the battalion's relationship to nongovernmental organizations and private voluntary organizations in the AO.
- The political, economic, military, and environmental situation in the AO.
- Local customs, cultures, religions, ethnic groups, tribes, and factions.
- Force protection measures.
- ROE and other restrictions on operations.
- Terrain, weather, infrastructure, and conditions unique to the AO and the nature of the operation.
- Security operations.
- Availability or need for specialized units such as public affairs, CA, PSYOP, chemical defense, engineers, MPs, and others.

b. **Attached Elements.** Battalions involved in support operations are normally reinforced with engineers and may also have troops attached. MPs, additional HSS personnel, and CA, public affairs, and PSYOP teams often support battalions in support operations. Since these units are not commonly part of battalions in combat operations, the staff and company commanders should learn the organizations, capabilities, limitations, and specific missions of attached organizations before employing them. In some cases, protecting those elements imposes additional loads on the maneuver companies. Additionally, if attached units do not possess FBCB2, they need liaison teams or instrumented units of the battalion to accompany them.

c. **Digital Systems.** The battalion staff uses the standard Army planning process modified for use with the C2 INFOSYS. The net effect of digitization in SBCT infantry battalions is the increase in their abilities to receive and distribute information, to develop plans more quickly, and to execute and modify operations more effectively than their analog counterparts. The battalion's C2 INFOSYS facilitate tracking and supervising support operations by giving battalion and company commanders timely intelligence and highly accurate information about their own dispositions. The reduced time required for force tracking and status reporting gives the commanders and battalion staffs better information and more time to anticipate future events. Special uses for the C2 INFOSYS, such as tracking supplies for humanitarian operations and recording area damage or contamination from storms or accidents, also give the battalion advantages.

9-6. COMMAND AND CONTROL

Standard command and staff doctrine applies to support operations command and control. Orders, estimates, planning guidance, rehearsals, and backbriefs are all useful in directing support operations. The need for mutual understanding between all members of the command group is as great in support operations as in combat operations.

a. **Cooperation.** As in other cases, cooperation with foreign headquarters and other services or agencies imposes special requirements for training, coordination, and liaison. Multiservice and multinational operations in which the battalion controls troops of other services or nations or is subordinate to another nation's or service's command call for

special attention to command relationships and limitations on the commander's prerogatives.

b. **Communications.** The battalion's command and control systems yield significant advantages in planning and conducting support operations. Operation of these systems depends on communications architecture provided by the SBCT or by another higher level of command. Use of nontactical or other nonstandard communications is likely in a multinational operation or in support to civil authorities in the US. If this is the case, then battalion commanders and staff leaders need training in operating these tools. In the early and concluding stages of an operation, the signal structure may permit only limited use of the C2 INFOSYS. The battalion's plan for command and control must take that into account and provide for alternate means of communication or full reliance on tactical systems. Digitized connectivity to higher levels of command and to the information support structure multiplies the effectiveness of the battalion and must be established as soon as possible.

c. **Liaison Teams.** Digitally equipped liaison teams can be extremely useful in providing a common view of the situation for headquarters attached to the battalion. Battalions must staff their authorized liaison teams and identify their needs for additional teams as early as possible.

9-7. MANEUVER

Digitized battalions may be accustomed to operating with minimal control measures in their tactical training. In support operations, where area responsibilities, movements, and control of terrain are sensitive and hazards are sometimes widely scattered, the battalion needs detailed information on its AO and commonly uses detailed control measures. Battalion leaders must clearly delineate and ensure soldiers throughout the battalion understand routes, installations, hazards, the geographical responsibilities of companies, boundaries, and other control measures. Leaders must also clearly communicate special control measures, such as curfews, restrictions on movements, and prohibition of weapons, to all concerned.

a. **Dispersed Operations.** Typically, support operations missions call for dispersed operations. The MCS-Light and FBCB2 systems provide timely and accurate force tracking and facilitate reporting. In sensitive movements such as transport of hazardous materials or escorting disaster victims through dangerous areas, C2 INFOSYS tracking provides immediate information on progress. It frees leaders from most routine reporting and permits them to concentrate on more sensitive aspects of their mission. Faster movement of information concerning maneuver also facilitates faster reaction to threats and allows forces in motion to be routed around new hazards more responsively than is possible in an analog force.

b. **C2 INFOSYS Database.** If the battalion is augmented with special purpose units or with substitute mission vehicles, this affects digitized force tracking. The C2 INFOSYS databases must be updated to include additional elements, including the addition of IP addresses.

9-8. INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence collection and distribution systems facilitate support operations in the same general way they support other operations. The S2 uses the battalion's organic collection

assets to gather critical information on enemy or criminal forces and on the AO, according to the PIR established by the commander. The S2 then distributes intelligence to the battalion as it is developed. The battalion's ASAS-Light workstation is an important means of maintaining a current view of the situation. In support operations conducted where combat is not taking place, there may be no enemy force present. The battalion never conducts intelligence operations during operations in the US. Additionally, intelligence operations during some multinational operations and most UN operations are proscribed or severely limited. In some cases, intelligence operations may be replaced with neutral, self-defensive information collection operations.

9-9. INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE

A coordinated intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance effort is as critical to the battalion's success in support operations as during combat operations.

a. **Information Collection.** Information collection is a constant process that is guided by the commander's critical information requirements and is normally embodied in the ISR plan. The commander may employ reconnaissance troops, electronic sensors, patrols, engineers, liaison teams, and so forth to achieve his ISR aims. The battalion's reconnaissance platoon plays a special role in ISR, but every soldier and unit in the battalion has some responsibility for observing and reporting. Therefore, the battalion commander's PIR, focus for collection, and the associated ISR tasks must be known throughout the battalion and revised as often as necessary to assure that soldiers know what information is of greatest importance.

(1) **Collection Assets.** The SBCT calvary squadron (RSTA), with its UAVs and other electronic sensors, can directly support the battalion commander's PIR. However, in order to receive useful information from those assets, the battalion must specifically request ISR support. Without specific ISR tasks, the cavalry squadron (RSTA) is unlikely to provide the specific supporting information required by the battalion.

(2) **Human Intelligence.** Human intelligence is especially important during support operations. In many cases, TAC HUMINT specialists augment the SBCT. The battalion S2 normally receives some support from these teams and must be knowledgeable in their employment.

b. **Intelligence Production and Dissemination.** Intelligence production and dissemination is just as important during support operations as during other operations. The S2 uses the battalion's assigned, attached, and supporting collection assets to collect critical information on enemy forces and on the AI, according to the PIR established by the commander. The S2 then disseminates intelligence to the battalion as it is produced. The battalion's ASAS-Light workstation is an important means of maintaining a current view of the situation. It is important to note that intelligence operations during some multinational operations and most UN operations are proscribed or severely limited. In some cases, intelligence operations may be replaced with information collection operations.

9-10. FIRE SUPPORT

Basic fire planning considerations for direct and indirect fire weapons remain valid during support operations. FS plans in support operations are integrated into tactical or force protection operations as the situation warrants. Accuracy and timeliness assume

greater than normal importance in actions of support operations because of the importance of safeguarding the population and preventing collateral damage. The AFATDS gives the commander and the FSE exceptionally clear and timely information on all aspects of FS. Fire planners in the digitized FSE must make special provisions for integrating fires from analog units, from fire support units of other armies, and from the naval and air components.

9-11. MOBILITY AND SURVIVABILITY

Mobility and survivability generally constitute major activities in support operations missions, especially at their outset. Force protection may make large initial demands on both combat and construction engineers during FHA missions. Mobility for the force and the population is also an early issue in many support operations as roads and bridges require repair, rubble clearing, and hazardous area marking or clearing. Battalions can expect heavy commitments to securing engineer operations in the early stages of operations where enemy interference is possible. Even in mature support operations, engineer operations typically remain very active.

a. **Engineer Digital Tools.** The engineers of digitized forces employ software that facilitates managing and recording engineer work and posting results to MCS-Light and FBCB2. They also have access to topographic tools and engineer data electronically from anywhere in the world. These capabilities are of great value during support operations in managing engineer work, adjusting priorities, projecting needs, and informing their units and the population of the status of engineer projects.

b. **Battalion Engineer.** Support operations are commonly supported with a great number of attached combat engineer units as well as construction engineers and contracted civilian engineers. Several engineer companies may support a battalion conducting support operations; if so, the senior engineer company commander normally serves as the battalion engineer.

9-12. AIR DEFENSE

SBCT infantry battalions in support operations integrate air defense plans into tactical or force protection operations as the situation warrants. Battalions must optimize passive defense and must nominate vulnerable sites in their AOs for ADA protection where threats exist.

9-13. COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT

Combat service support for support operations usually requires substantial tailoring to adapt to unique mission requirements; logistical requirements vary considerably between types of support operations. Support operations commonly take place in areas where local resources and infrastructure are scarce, damaged, or fully devoted to the civilian population.

a. **CSSCS.** The digitized division's CSS system uses automation--CSSCS and related standard Army management information system (STAMIS)--and other advanced technologies to reduce the size of its support structure. The SBCT's habitually associated BSB is larger and more complex than its predecessors, and the logisticians' abilities to maintain visibility of their assets and to direct supplies and services directly to users has been improved.

b. **CSS Challenges.** The chief CSS challenges of support operations are to anticipate needs and to integrate nondigital units and sources into the support operation. Information needs include--

- Resources available in-theater.
- Status of critical supply items and repair jobs.
- Nature and condition of the infrastructure.
- Capabilities of general support CSS units.
- Mission tasks.
- Overall material readiness of the battalion.

c. **Contracting.** In some cases, contracting can augment organic CSS. Battalions may encounter contractor-provided services and supply operations in support operations environments. The S4 and commander must understand the terms and limitations of contractor support.

d. **Health Service Support.** The battalion deploys with its organic medical assets for support operations. In addition, the SBCT is normally augmented with a forward surgical team (FST) and an FSMT (corps air ambulances). The battalion may be augmented with additional HSS assets to support the battalion's mission. Support operations may include disaster relief and refugee operations. Medical treatment provided in support of these operations must be in compliance with Title 10 of the US Code. See FM 8-42 for HSS support of disaster relief or refugee operations. The brigade support medical company (BSMC) may require a humanitarian augmentation medical equipment set, unit assembly 1623, to perform its support operations mission. Key personnel (health care providers) should review the set prior to deployment to provide for contingencies and mitigate (add or delete items) so that the level and types of medical supplies in the set conform to the mission requirements.

e. **Liaison with Civil Authorities.** Nonstandard supporting relationships and close coordination with civil authorities demand use of digitized liaison teams to assure their greatest usefulness. They can also demand the creation of additional liaison teams that may have to operate without digital equipment.

9-14. INFORMATION OPERATIONS

Information operations shape the perceptions of friendly, neutral, and hostile forces. The force commander employs PSYOP, CA, public affairs, and OPSEC as part of his information operation. The battalion commander supports the higher commander's IO, carrying out tasks assigned to him and acting independently within the higher commander's intent and the constraints of his own resources. Because support operations are complex, usually decentralized, and often critical to the force's perceived legitimacy, continuity and consistency in IO are extremely important. The battalion must present its position clearly to assure that the interested public, both in the US and in the AO, understand it. The commander must be aware of theater positions and interests and of the effects of events on the perceptions of his troops, his opponents, and the population in general. He must understand the positions of and information environment created by--

- Neutral parties.
- Warring or formerly warring factions.
- The population and its major segments.
- Other agencies working in the AO.

- Media.
- Information gathered by elements of the battalion.

NOTE: In support operations conducted in the US, information operations do not include PSYOP. Rather, they consist of public affairs and any necessary OPSEC.

9-15. OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Planning for support operations missions may include additional considerations.

a. **Force Protection.** Force protection requires special consideration in support operations because threats may be different and because, in some cases, enemy or criminal forces may seek to kill, wound, or capture US soldiers for political purposes. Battalion leaders must identify threats to their units, make soldiers aware of the dangers, and create safeguards to protect them. Terrorist and guerrilla operations are of special concern. Commanders must also consider environmental threats such as diseases and climatic hazards; special dangers such as chemical contamination, unexploded ordnance, and weakened bridges and buildings; and criminal violence.

b. **Force Guidelines and Rules of Engagement.** Limitations on action from orders and ROE are the norm in support operations. Broad limitations may consist of restrictions on mounted patrolling at particular times and in specified areas, prohibitions on crossing political boundaries, and requirements to refrain from apprehending or limiting the movement of designated groups or individuals. They may originate in law, treaty, and settlement terms and in commanders' guidance. While ROE vary considerably among situations, they always allow soldiers to protect themselves from deadly threats.

c. **Legal Restrictions.** Legal restrictions apply to all Army operations including support operations. Legal restrictions relevant to support operations missions may include the Law of Land Warfare, the Uniform Code of Military Justice, treaty agreements, and federal, state, and foreign law. The SBCT and higher staff judge advocates play important roles in planning and conducting these missions. In some cases, the JAG provides DS to the battalion in the form of legal officers or enlisted legal assistants.

d. **Media Interest.** Media interest in support operations is normally high. Casualties and damage attract immediate attention and can affect the public's perception of the success and discipline of the force. A battalion's soldiers and leaders must be sensitive to civilian concerns, media interests, and the way political positions of factions in the AO affect their actions.

e. **Information Dominance.** Superior information allows the battalion commander to anticipate developments and act to prevent incidents, to protect his soldiers or the population, and to forestall greater loss or damage. To a greater extent than its analog counterparts, the battalion has direct access to information from higher echelon sources. It can also distribute critical information with greater speed in greater detail to its companies and platoons. Maintaining information dominance requires careful analysis of the battalion's information needs and a mission-specific IPB supported by a collection plan that fully utilizes all the battalion's organic and supporting assets. The ISR analysis platoon and ISR integration platoon of the MICO support the battalion commander's information needs and contribute to his understanding of the situation by integrating and

analyzing information collected from the SBCT's various intelligence sources (HUMINT, SIGINT, UAVs, and so forth).

Section III. PATTERN OF OPERATIONS

While support operations vary greatly in every mission, the SBCT infantry battalion can expect events to follow a broad pattern of response, recovery, and restoration.

9-16. RESPONSE

As part of a response, the battalion enters the affected area, normally under SBCT control, and makes contact with other relief organizations. Planning for the operation, staging command posts into the area, establishing security, deploying the battalion, and initiating contacts with supported activities and other parts of the relief force occur during this phase of operations. The battalion may make its chief contributions in this phase. Its soldiers are usually among the first relief forces to arrive. Its command and control structure gives it robust early ability to communicate and coordinate. Further, the battalion's ability to reconnoiter and gather information make it useful in the initial efforts of authorities to establish understanding and control of the area and to oversee critical actions. Typical requirements of the response period are--

- Search and rescue.
- High volume emergency medical treatment.
- Hazard identification.
- Initiation of information operations.
- Food and water distribution.
- Collection of displaced people in temporary shelter.
- Support to law enforcement agencies.
- Repair of power generation and distribution systems.
- Clearance and repair of roads, railways, and canals.
- Firefighting, NBC and hazardous industrial waste decontamination, and flood control.

9-17. RECOVERY

Once the battalion operation is underway, recovery begins. With initial emergencies resolved and a working relationship between all parties in place, there should be steady progress in relieving the situation throughout this phase of operations. The battalion is fully deployed in an AO or in an assigned task. Its work includes coordination with its parent headquarters, supported groups, and other relief forces and daily allocation of its own assets to recovery tasks. The battalion's task organization is likely to change periodically as the need for particular services and support changes. Security, maintenance, effective employment of resources, and soldier support all need continuing attention. Medical officers should review and assist the commander in counteracting the psychological effects of disaster relief work and exposure to human suffering on the battalion's soldiers throughout the operation. Typical tasks include--

- Continuing and modifying information operations.
- Resettling people from emergency shelters to their homes.
- Repairing infrastructure.
- Contracting to provide appropriate support (when feasible).

- Restoring power, water, communication, and sanitation services.
- Removing debris.
- Investigating crimes and supporting law enforcement agencies.
- Transferring authority and responsibility to civil authorities.
- Planning for redeployment.
- Assisting with restoring the health care delivery system.

9-18. RESTORATION

Restoration is the return of normalcy to the area. As civil authorities assume full control of remaining emergency operations and normal services, the battalion transfers those responsibilities to replacement agencies and begins redeployment from the area. During restoration the commander should consider issues such as--

- Transfer of authority to civil agencies.
- Transition of command and control for agencies and units that remain in the area.
- Movement plans that support redeployment and continued recovery in the area.
- Staging of command and control out of the area.
- Accountability of property or transfer of property to the community, if authorized.
- Force protection during movement.

Section IV. SEQUENCE OF OPERATIONS

Generally, support operations follow the sequence of--

- Movement into the AO.
- Establishment of a base of operations.
- Maintenance of stability or support.
- Terminating operations.

In every part of the sequence, there are special considerations for digitized units initiating an operation or replacing another unit that has performed the mission before them.

9-19. MOVEMENT INTO THE AREA OF OPERATIONS

Command and control considerations normally include using advance parties or liaison teams, establishing command posts, and sequencing the arrival of key leaders. Battalion commanders must prepare a complete plan for establishing control of the AO that includes a concept for phased installation of signal and C2. Transfer of authority from the unit in place to the arriving unit and methodical, accountable handover of the AO is also of primary interest. Detailed rehearsals and mock drills held in preparation for this task are a regular part of preparatory training. Mission CCIR should guide staff specialists as they build databases and map displays to support the operation. The commander's PIR should determine the order in which critical information (for example, enemy dispositions, locations of hazards, and communities in greatest need of support) is assembled and distributed. Because they create information dominance, the assets of the digitized battalion generally facilitate faster, more secure performance of key tasks. For

instance, digitized C2 simplifies the processes of opening routes, repairing bridges, clearing obstacles, establishing security, and imposing movement control.

9-20. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BASE OF OPERATIONS

Security, support, and continuous operations are the primary considerations during the establishment of a battalion base of operations. The battalion must maintain security continuously and may spend its first days of operation exclusively in securing its bases.

a. **Occupation.** During the response phase, the battalion moves in accordance with the controlling headquarters' order, employing advance parties and quartering parties as necessary. The battalion may move to an assembly area in the affected area initially or may occupy its AO directly from the march. Establishing communications across the AO, refueling vehicles and recovering any inoperable equipment, establishing logistical facilities and medical aid stations, and reconnoitering the area are all early priorities for the battalion. The battalion must complete these preliminary tasks as quickly as possible in order to assume the mission promptly. In some cases, the battalion must defer operations until it completes such tasks. For instance, a medical platoon cannot receive patients until its basic set-up is complete.

b. **Battalion Focus.** The battalion commander, the principal staff officers, and the company commanders vigorously engage in making personal contact with supported groups, partners in the operation, and community representatives early in the response phase. Executive officers and staff assistants are, therefore, responsible for much of the internal activity of the battalion during response.

c. **Security.** Security of the battalion is important during all phases of the operation, but especially during arrival and organization. In addition to direct threats to the soldiers of the unit, the commander must also understand and provide for normal environmental hazards and special conditions caused by the emergency itself, such as disease, chemical residue, mines, and damaged infrastructure.

d. **24-Hour Operation.** Organizing the command post for 24-hour operation in nontactical support operations also requires early attention. A detailed SOP, complete operations maps, and special provisions for communications, inspections, reporting, and adjusting security levels are necessities. Establishing a high standard for operations from the outset is key both because of the general sensitivity of support operations and because of the battalion's special vulnerabilities in its first days of the mission.

e. **Equipment Substitution.** In some cases, HMMWVs or other light wheeled equipment replaces the ICVs of the battalion to facilitate movement, limit the damages to infrastructure, or present a less threatening appearance. In the case of such substitution, driver and maintenance training is necessary well before the battalion assumes the mission. The battalion may have to modify CSS to support the new fleet. If the battalion replaces an analog unit or a different size organization, it may have to modify base camp layouts or even reduce the number of operating bases.

9-21. MAINTENANCE OF SUPPORT

Steady-state mission performance differs in each instance. Support operations have a varied duration and characteristically orient on relieving crises in an area or population.

a. **Protect the Force.** Force protection remains a priority throughout support operations, and threats are constantly reassessed. The battalion must maintain consistency

in dealing with the population and in enforcing policy over time. Likewise, the commander must ensure maintenance of troop information and discipline throughout the operation. The battalion should perform internal reviews and after action reviews (AARs) and seek outside inspection of critical functions to assure that its standards of security and performance remain high throughout the full course of the mission. Involving soldiers in AARs and circulating lessons learned throughout the battalion are means of preventing complacency, boredom, and lapses in security.

b. **Readiness.** During some support operations, the battalion must retain its readiness to transition to conventional operations. It must maintain and rehearse reaction forces and provisions for increased levels of security in base camps, at observation posts, and in patrols to assure readiness. Commanders should continually review their operations to detect patterns, vulnerabilities, or complacency an opponent might exploit.

9-22. TERMINATING OPERATIONS

Support operations end in different ways. Crises may be resolved, or a continuing support operation may be handed over to a replacement unit, a multinational force, a police force, or civil authorities. Missions of short duration or narrow scope (such as support to civil authorities) may end with the completion of the assigned task.

a. **With Transfer of Control.** Transferring control of an AO or an operation to a follow-on force requires detailed coordination to assure that all relevant information passes to the commander or the other authority assuming responsibility. This procedure entails transfer of databases, maps, inventories, records, and equipment. In cases where the battalion uses unique files and systems, staff leaders and commanders may have to go through extensive coordination to assure that their successors possess and understand all critical information. If the replacement unit uses analog C2 systems, this process is more complicated.

b. **Without Transfer of Control.** If the battalion leaves the AO without replacement, it must plan for an orderly, secure departure that protects the force throughout the operation and sustains sufficient C2 in the AO until withdrawal is complete. In redeployment, force protection and accountability for soldiers, systems, and materiel are always of concern. Digitization assists the commander in following the movements of his unit throughout its withdrawal.

9-23. TRANSITION TO COMBAT

In some support operations (typically those that take place in an active combat theater), the battalion commander must remain prepared to defend himself or to attack forces that threaten his command. This applies differently in each operation. It may mean maintaining a reserve or a quick reaction force within the battalion. It may even compel the battalion to dispose its forces in ways that allow for immediate transition from support operations to combat. Additionally, the battalion must address the considerations of transitioning to less restrictive ROE.

a. **Mission Focus.** Because of their size and resources, companies should be assigned a single mission. If they are performing support operations tasks, they are normally capable of only self-defense and very limited offensive actions. To improve their ability to transition to combat, the battalion commander may designate a company as the reserve, position a company to defend or secure the AO, or discontinue most

support operations tasks and position all his companies in a tactical assembly area, ready to respond to anticipated enemy action.

b. **Reaction Time.** States of increased alert or readiness can reduce reaction time for a transition from support operations to combat. Contingency plans covering the most likely combat actions are necessary in preparing for this transition. Rehearsals assure better reaction and deter enemies from overt action.

c. **Readiness Preservation.** Passive measures that preserve readiness include dispersion of forces, operation of the early warning systems, and force protection measures affecting arming and moving of troops. Active measures include positioning of field artillery, air defense artillery, engineer, tank, and infantry companies, along with the preparation of contingency plans.

d. **Maintenance of COP.** The battalion's ability to maintain current COP; distribute information, orders, and graphics; coordinate fires, aviation, and close air support; direct CSS precisely; and gain information dominance facilitate its transition from support operations to combat. By maintaining current contingency plans, alert staffs and commanders, and well-trained and informed soldiers, the battalion can meet combat challenges ably on short notice.

Section V. TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS

The SBCT infantry battalion must conduct support operations with consistency and impartiality to encourage cooperation from indigenous forces and the population and to preserve the legitimacy of the overall effort. The actions of squads, platoons, or even individual soldiers take place under the scrutiny of many interested groups and can have disproportionate effects on mission success. Therefore, high levels of discipline and training and a thorough understanding of mission outcome are necessary for effective support operations.

9-24. TRAINING FOR SUPPORT OPERATIONS

A sound foundation in combat mission training and in basic military skills and discipline underpins the battalion's ability to perform support operations missions. However, many of the key individual and collective skills differ and must be trained for deliberately. Battalions use most of their regularly trained movement and security tasks in support operations missions, but they modify these tasks for the special conditions of their specific mission. They also train leaders and soldiers for unique tasks necessary for a certain type of operation.

a. **Mission-Essential Task List.** Support operations tasks are not usually included in a battalion's mission-essential task list unless the battalion has been specifically assigned a support operations mission or its commander has determined that the likelihood of such assignment warrants dedicated training. Training for support operations, therefore, begins with the perception or assignment of a mission. Notification for support operations employment normally requires rapid reaction to an emergency but sometimes may allow for deliberate preparation.

b. **Deliberate Preparation.** In the case of deliberate preparation, a commander can anticipate a minimum of one to two weeks of mission training. This training may include a structured mission rehearsal exercise, in-country orientation, and leader reconnaissance of the AO. Classes on the AO and the mission, training in the ROE and in use of special

equipment, and familiarization with the other organizations present in the area may be part of this training. Reviews of Army lessons learned and preparation of families and the rear detachment also accompany this training.

c. **Immediate Response.** When less time is available (usually in an emergency), the commander may have to respond immediately to mission requirements. In cases such as Hurricane Andrew and the Rwandan relief mission, commanders relied on the general military skills and discipline of their troops and trained to the task as time allowed. Conditions vary from case to case in this kind of reaction, but commanders can generally draw on Army lessons learned, general purpose tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), and maps prepared for training and intelligence from the projected AO to identify the most critical training requirements. The battalion must address these in order of priority as time allows. Platoon and squad leaders can teach soldier skills and individual readiness training during deployment. Every operation differs in its details. Techniques that are effective in one theater are not necessarily effective elsewhere. Situational factors from cultural practices to geography, and from coalition make-up to ROE, represent substantial differences that training programs must take into account.

d. **Support Operations Task Organizations.** Many support operations modify headquarters and unit organizations. New staff positions may be added to the battalion (CA, PSYOP, and public affairs are common). Unfamiliar organizations may be added to the task organization and the companies, and platoons of the battalion may be re-equipped and partially reorganized to meet mission requirements or to conform to mission requirements. In such cases, conducting staff drills, training augmentees on digitized C2, learning to operate new equipment, and practicing operations in new unit configurations all must figure into battalion and company training plans.

9-25. BASIC SOLDIER SKILLS

Basic soldier skills are common to all operations and are as important in support operations as elsewhere. Soldiers employed in support operations should be trained in--

- Individual and crew-served weapons.
- Special tools, equipment, and weapons.
- Mounted and dismounted land navigation.
- Observation and reporting procedures.
- First aid.
- Customs and basic language phrases.
- ROE.
- Safety.
- Counterterrorist actions.
- Mine and booby-trap identification.
- Vehicle, aircraft, weapon, uniform, and insignia identification.
- FBCB2 and other appropriate C2 INFOSYS skills.
- Detainee handling.
- Digital communication operations.

9-26. DSO- OR FHA-SPECIFIC TRAINING

Training for support operations centers on assisting distressed populations and on responding to emergencies. Training for DSO and FHA operations routinely requires

cooperation with civil authorities and normally involves operating under special legal restrictions. DSO and FHA training may address--

- Orienting troops and leaders on legal restrictions and requirements.
- Preparing troops and leaders for hazards in the AO.
- Protecting humanitarian relief efforts.
- Organizing and conducting convoys with civilians and civilian vehicles.
- Supporting civil affairs and public affairs operations.
- Organizing and securing relief centers.
- Assisting in logistical support and construction engineer operations.
- Supporting the coordination of nonmilitary organizations.
- Familiarizing troops with mission-specific tasks such as firefighting, flood control, hazardous material clean-up, riot control, protection of endangered groups or individuals, assistance to civilian law enforcement officials, and resettlement actions.

9-27. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Almost all support operations missions have additional requirements. Some of these include--

- Orienting leaders and soldiers to the mission.
- Familiarizing troops with the area and cultures.
- Adapting standard tactical practices to the conditions of the mission.
- Adapting CS and CSS operations to the limits of the mission.
- Understanding and applying ROE.
- Providing for force protection.
- Conducting effective media relations.
- Collecting information.